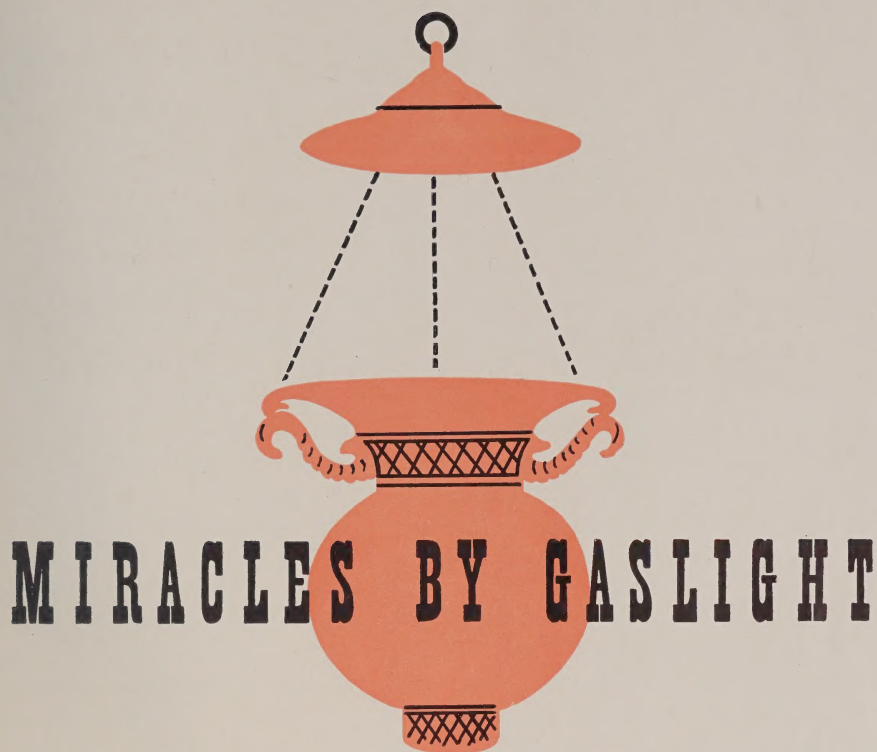


SAVE

1945



miracles by **GASLIGHT**



NEW ENGLAND DEACONESS HOSPITAL
BUILDING FUND



It was almost fifty years ago that Zions Herald proudly told of the opening of the New England Deaconess Hospital in Boston. The operating room, we read, was fitted with plate glass shelves, "three fine Welsbach lights and an operating table of the latest design and finish."

These "fine" gas lights may well symbolize the limitations of that early hospital, limitations over which science and spirit triumphed. Difficult and dangerous operations became more so under their fickle light. Open flames made the use of anesthesia hazardous. Yet, despite them, some of the most advanced surgery of the era was performed in that small operating room . . . miracles by gaslight.

The gas burners of that early operating room are now as obsolete as most of the other features of the first hospital. They seem as quaint, indeed, as some of the popular medical concepts of that day. The very page of the Herald which details the assets and purposes of the new hospital carries an advertisement for Hood's Sarsaparilla promising "positive, perfect, permanent cures" for "scrofula in severest forms, like goitre, swelled neck, running sores, hip disease, sores in the eyes . . . and rheumatism, where patients were unable to work or walk for weeks."

The turn of the century, however, brought the flowering of American medicine and with it the development of hospitals. Slowly, men and women discovered that a hospital is not a mere refuge for the homeless sick, but rather the best possible place to go to get well. Like other hospitals of the time—and the number was slowly increasing—New England Deaconess Hospital, in every way consistent with its limited financial resources, strove to keep up with the advance of medical science and with the people's desire for hospital care.

THE PRESSURE OF PROGRESS

Electric lights were soon installed. Yearly, more efficient equipment was perfected to abet the physician and surgeon. The simple science of sunshine—chief therapy of the early priest-doctors of Greece—was rediscovered and the new Deaconess Hospital, opened in 1907 on the Fenway, was built to utilize to the utmost the precious commodities of sun, light and air. Since that time, the original building has been greatly enlarged, new buildings added, until, a decade ago, New



England Deaconess Hospital reached its present complement of four main buildings and five auxiliary and dormitory buildings.

But the buildings and the modern equipment within them is but a small part of the story, for beyond these edifices, the hospital is an association of medical men, world-famed for their specialties. Through them, New England Deaconess Hospital has become a great medical center, a teaching hospital for doctors and nurses who go forth the world over to share their knowledge. And, more, it has become a haven of health for many a sufferer once considered incurable.

It must be admitted that the hospital's facilities have not kept pace with the progress of the medical staff nor with the pressure of public demand for hospitalization. There have been no major additions since 1934 and even with its present capacity of 315 beds, New England Deaconess Hospital has had a daily waiting list of from 600 to 700 patients for more than five years. Nevertheless, the inner light of the hospital is still constant. Despite all deficiencies, it serves as always the sick and the sorrowing, regardless of race or creed or the ability of the patient to pay.

It is the purpose of this book to tell the part the Methodists of New England have played in the hospital's proud past, to suggest, perhaps, their part in the future.

BENEFACT MINISTRY

In its beneficent ministry, New England Deaconess Hospital is true to the spirit of the Methodists who founded it. It was conceived in order that Methodist Deaconesses, dedicated to "Christian service," might better serve the sick and the poor.

In the fall of 1888, according to old records, the committee of women charged with the entertainment of the executive meeting of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the New England Conference found themselves, "as a result of a little business tact," in possession of a surplus of \$150. They used this money to found a Deaconess Home and Training School for home and foreign missionaries. From this small beginning grew the New England Deaconess Hospital, which has cared for 200,000 patients and whose current assets are now more than \$3,000,000.

Enrollment at the home that first year was eight. Bible instruction predominated, but from the very first, courses in nursing were offered. It was the work of the Deaconesses to go among the poor of Boston, and often they found that medical care must come before spiritual aid.



• GREATER NEW ENGLAND DEACONESS HOSPITAL •

Many times they came upon mothers and their newborn deserted in squalid tenements, cripples and old people with no one to care for them. And the Deaconesses who had come to talk of God stayed to clean and paint, to nurse and comfort. Each year more and more time was spent in district nursing. Always the Deaconesses worked to gain more knowledge that they might be more useful. In 1893 it was arranged that one of the students be sent to a hospital for further training. Most of all the Deaconesses longed for a hospital of their own.

HOME AND HOSPITAL

The prayers and efforts of the Deaconesses were answered in 1896. The New England Deaconess Association acquired the house next door to the Training School and Home and converted it into a small hospital. Both were typical Boston residences, five stories each, with "swell fronts." The hospital had beds for 14 and each bed could be raised and lowered for the patient's comfort. Beside the beds were electric call bells. A homelike atmosphere prevailed throughout. Everyone mentioned the snowy curtains at the windows, the cheerful furnishings.

Gone was the earlier horror of a hospital, for the nurse Deaconesses in their blue and white seersucker dresses, white aprons, and tiny caps like paper cups, were well known and well beloved in Boston. Most served without pay, others for a very meager stipend. The supervising nurse even left a large hospital and a salary of \$1,200 to work without remuneration at the New England Deaconess Hospital. Of it a contemporary observer wrote, "... the very prevalent prejudice against hospitals would be entirely dispelled if one could be sick here. It is a real home-hospital."

Soon, and largely because of the quality of the nursing, many of the city's leading physicians, among them Dr. Maurice Richardson, began to send their patients to the fledgling hospital. The rooms were constantly crowded. Often the superintendent gave her own bed to a patient and slept on chairs in her office. Even so, "very many" had to be turned away for lack of room. As early as 1897, the annual report was saying that a hospital five times larger was needed!

So crowded was the hospital that it was necessary to close it almost every summer, sometimes for as long as two months, for repairs and alterations. Such a circumstance is, of course, inconceivable in a modern hospital which, despite all demands upon it, must maintain high standards of cleanliness, cheerfulness and service 365 days a year, day and night. Indeed, the doctors and nurses of the



early hospital worked against odds which often tried their skills and their endurance to the utmost.

The very hominess of the converted residence doubled the work to be done. There was no elevator, only a steep and narrow staircase, ill suited to stretchers. There was only one clinical thermometer, and it traveled from floor to floor in a basket on a pulley. The annual report for 1901 tells in sorrow of the resignation of the head nurse due to illness, adding, "The inconveniences of the present hospital building are so great that it is a wonder that the nurses do not break down oftener than they do."

A MEDICAL MECCA

From such humble beginnings and such devotion has developed the New England Deaconess Hospital we know today. The hospital proudly carries on the traditions of its founders. Through the unique blending of science and spirit which has always characterized its service, it has gained a prominence unsurpassed in its particular fields.

For many it has become a medical mecca. Yearly, more and more patients apply for admission. Often the treatment they seek may mean the difference between invalidism and health; and yet, within recent years, hundreds have had to wait months to be admitted. For all the good will in the world, there simply is not room enough for those who seek and need the services of New England Deaconess Hospital.

Plans for the critically needed expansion of the hospital have been under consideration for more than five years. They have been deferred only because of the pressure of national events. Now, however, the hospital's Board of Trustees believes the enlargement can no longer be delayed and has begun a campaign for a building fund in order that construction may start as soon as materials are again available.

This fund will pay for a new central building unifying the whole hospital and providing accommodations for two hundred additional patients. The new building will also provide for the greatly needed centralizing of administrative offices, now scattered in three buildings, a new operating suite with twelve operating rooms, two x-ray departments, and the kitchens. Besides assuring better care for patients, the new central building will make possible substantial economies in operating costs.

The entire project, involving some reconstruction as well as the new building, will cost \$1,500,000. It is hoped and fully expected that Methodists of New England, to whom the hospital means so much, will share prominently in assuring the greater hospital.

METHODIST RESPONSIBILITY

Each room in the first Deaconess Hospital was a memorial to some prominent Methodist. Even the chairs—47 in number and each one of a different style—were the gift of a *friend in faith*. Throughout the years, as token of their pride and confidence in its work, Methodists have given generously to the hospital. But however bounteous the gifts, they have never equaled the cost of free service given by the hospital to Methodist ministers, their families, and worthy Methodist parishioners. It is estimated that, in the 49 years of its service, New England Deaconess Hospital has given free care to both pastors and laymen amounting to nearly a million dollars.

It is therefore particularly fitting that the main floor of the proposed new building be reserved as a memorial to Methodists who contribute to the building fund. Here too, may be inscribed the names of the founders and early workers within the hospital, the beloved names of those who made possible the great hospital of today—perhaps that of the Reverend Charles Parkhurst, editor of Zions Herald, who first called attention to the need for a Deaconess Hospital, and of Miss Mary Lunn, the first Superintendent.

A fund of \$224,400 is needed to build and equip this first floor and subscriptions totaling that amount are being sought from members of the Methodist Church. Methodist responsibility in this project is clear, for only through full participation can New England Deaconess Hospital be assured continued growth and usefulness in the tradition of Methodism and of voluntary, non-profit hospitals everywhere.

Here is a heritage to be treasured and strengthened. The flickering lights and the "roof and four walls" of the original hospital may have become obsolete, but the hospital motive has never changed. New England Deaconess Hospital, now, as in the beginning, exists only to bring to all who call upon it the modern miracles of medicine.



